

## 2.0 ALTERNATIVES

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This chapter presents the alternatives being considered for implementation of the Minidoka North Side RMP. It describes the No Action Alternative and two action alternatives in detail and provides a summary comparison. IDPR manages Lake Walcott State Park; however, public entity non-Federal managing partner would also be required for any major recreational improvements described in the alternatives that are located outside of the State Park. Reclamation would allow these recreational developments to occur with cost share funding by a managing partner. Minor recreational developments, considered “minimum basic facilities”, include improvements such as trails and signage and can be pursued and funded entirely by Reclamation. Also, cost-share conditions would need to be met, and Reclamation funds or other funding sources would have to be available. For comparison of the alternatives, it is assumed that all of the facilities would be built. Other actions, such as increased noxious weed control, do not require managing partners or cost-sharing agreements. Such actions may require memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with other agency partners, and are assumed to be implemented for the purpose of comparing and analyzing the alternatives.

### 2.1 Alternatives Development

NEPA requires agencies to evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to a proposed Federal Action. For the Minidoka North Side RMP EA, the proposed Federal Action is the adoption and implementation of the RMP. Alternative management scenarios should meet the purpose and need of the proposal while minimizing or avoiding environmental impacts. The purpose of the RMP is to manage the Minidoka North Side parcel resources by maintaining Project purposes and protecting and enhancing natural and cultural resource values and recreational opportunities.

The RMP will serve as a blueprint for resource protection, management, and enhancement of programs and facilities for a 15-year period. The Draft Alternatives were developed from input provided through the first public meeting, newsbrief response forms returned to Reclamation, Ad Hoc Work Group (AHWG) meetings, and Reclamation’s Planning Team. The NEPA alternative development process allows Reclamation to work with interested agencies and the public to formulate alternative management actions that respond to identified issues. This process is described in Chapter 4, *Consultation and Coordination*.

This process resulted in the development of two action alternatives that prescribe a range of natural, cultural, and recreation resource management actions. These actions would be applied depending upon the fate of the land parcels. Those parcels that will be retained for Project purposes (long-term management) may be treated differently than those that are not needed for Project purposes (interim management). These differences are described in this section under each alternative. The No Action Alternative, as required by NEPA, is also analyzed. Each alternative would result in different future conditions in the Minidoka North Side Study Area. The three alternatives are summarized below:

- **Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices.** If implemented, this alternative would mean continuing to manage Reclamation lands according to existing agreements and under current laws and regulations. Alternative A is not a “status quo” situation. Management of the Study Area lands would be on an ad-hoc basis, without benefit of a management plan.
- **Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis.** This alternative emphasizes natural and cultural resource enhancement while maintaining current recreational opportunities. Some facility improvements are proposed.
- **Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis.** This alternative emphasizes multiple use of the parcels while maintaining resource values.

Table 2.1-1 summarizes the features of these alternatives. They are described in detail in Section 2.2.

### 2.1.1 Similarities Among Alternatives

Although the alternatives differ in many ways, several features are common to all alternatives:

- Continue to operate and maintain Reclamation lands and facilities. For safety and security reasons, require that Minidoka Dam and the security area surrounding the dam remain closed to public access.
- Continue to adhere to existing and future Federal, State, and County laws and regulations.
- Prior to any ground-disturbing action, the appropriate level of site-specific NEPA analysis would be completed. Necessary cultural resources surveys, tribal consultations about traditional cultural properties (TCPs), site evaluation actions, site protection or mitigation actions would occur when planning new actions. Tribal consultations to identify Indian sacred sites or ITAs would also occur as part of planning such actions.
- For recreation development and management aspects, follow the principles in Public Law 89-72, Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965, as amended by Title 28 of Public Law 102-575. Basically, if a non-Federal public entity has agreed to manage recreation on Reclamation lands, Reclamation may share development costs for up to 50 percent of the total cost.
- Coordinate with law enforcement entities regarding Public Law 107-69, which authorizes Reclamation to enter agreements with State, Tribal, and local law enforcement agencies to carry out law enforcement on Reclamation land.
- Follow Section 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, including the process set forth in 36 CFR 800.
- Comply with current accessibility regulations and standards required at all new facilities and on retrofits of existing facilities.

All actions are dependent upon the availability of funding and must be within the authority of the applicable agency.

**TABLE 2.1-1 MINIDOKA NORTH SIDE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN –FINAL EA ALTERNATIVES**

Area and Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative) <sup>1/</sup> : Continuation of Existing Management Practices		Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis		Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis	
	Retain for Project Purposes	Not needed for Project Purposes	Retain for Project Purposes	Not needed for Project Purposes	Retain for Project Purposes	Not needed for Project Purposes
	Long-term Management	Interim Management	Long-term Management	Interim Management	Long-term Management	Interim Management
<b>Land Use and Management</b>						
Agricultural Leases	Consider new leases only when they contribute to the closure of drain wells and where water rights are legally appropriated.		Same as Alternative A, with the additional restriction of: • New leases only if no impacts to natural resources/ cultural resources/threatened and endangered species.	No agricultural leases.	Consider new leases on case-by-case basis; key criterion is benefit to Project purposes where water rights are legally appropriated. New leases only if no impacts to cultural resources/threatened and endangered species.	No agricultural leases.
Grazing Leases	Consider continuation of existing leases. No new leases considered.		Consider new grazing leases on designated parcels that do not affect operations and maintenance, and are based on protection and/or improvement of natural and cultural resource values and water quality concerns. Also, consider grazing as a potential fire management tool for cheatgrass parcels.		Consider new grazing leases on additional designated parcels that don't affect operations and maintenance and don't degrade natural and cultural resource and water quality values. Also, consider grazing as a potential fire management tool for cheatgrass parcels.	
Sand and Gravel Extraction/Sites	Consider on a case-by-case basis where it does not conflict with Reclamation needs.		Consider on a case-by-case basis where it does not conflict with other Reclamation needs or priority natural and cultural resource values.		Same as Alternative A.	
Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)	Not Applicable – pertains to <b>relinquishment and/or disposal</b> of lands not needed for Project purposes.	Consider on a case-by-case basis (within Reclamation authority).	Same as Alternative A.	Consider on a case-by-case basis (within Reclamation authority). Evaluate based on natural & cultural resource values, if applicable.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative B.

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Area and Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative) <sup>1/</sup> : Continuation of Existing Management Practices		Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis		Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis	
	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management
Pest Control (insects/rodents)	Prepare, implement, and follow recommendations of IPM Plan.		Same as Alternative A.		Same as Alternative A.	
Trespass & Encroachments	Monitor and address problems on a case-by-case basis. Potential actions include signage and public education (e.g., brochure development). Work to eliminate existing trespass.		Implement same actions as Alternative A, but prioritize actions, i.e., eliminate trespass and encroachment by: (1) establishing priorities; (2) surveying sites to determine extent of trespass; (3) updating GIS; (4) increasing enforcement (e.g., notification, fines); (5) working with adjacent landowners to eliminate existing trespass and rehabilitate/re-seed when appropriate; and (6) monitoring to prevent future trespass. (7) advertise Crime Witness Program for reporting dumping and other illegal and unauthorized use.		Same as Alternative B.	
Unauthorized Uses (including dumping)	Monitor and address problems on a case-by-case basis. Potential actions include dump cleanup, etc.		Survey sites to determine and define extent of problem (similar to process described above for trespass/encroachment).  For dump sites, characterize contents and prioritize cleanup, as well as attempt to determine responsible parties.  Monitor to prevent future dumping.		Same as Alternative B.	
Fire Management	Develop and implement a comprehensive fire management plan, including agreements for fire prevention, fuels management, and land rehabilitation in an effort to protect, restore, and enhance the natural resource values of RMP lands, as well as public safety-related concerns.		Same as Alternative A.		Same as Alternative A.	

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	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management
Public Information	Maintain existing interpretive facilities at Lake Walcott State Park and Cinder Pit site (news releases, signs).	No actions.	Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide signage to emphasize natural and cultural resource values, recreation access, and no dumping.</li> </ul>	Focus signage on no dumping; minimal other signage needs.	Same as Alternative B, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide signage to emphasize safety and regulations due to multiple use activities.</li> </ul>	Same as Alternative B.
<b>Natural Resources</b>						
Federal and State Listed and Sensitive Species	Implement required actions to avoid impacts to and facilitate recovery of ESA-listed species.		Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperate in the recovery of Idaho Conservation Data Center- and BLM-listed and sensitive species.</li> </ul>		Same as Alternative A.	
Wetlands	Continue to create drain water wetlands to manage drain water and facilitate closure of groundwater injection wells on a case-by-case basis (intent is to close all drain wells by the end of 2006).	No wetlands development on lands not needed for Project purposes.	Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement actions specifically to improve/increase wetlands habitat value, in conjunction with and when compatible with drain water management. Coordinate with partners, such as Ducks Unlimited.</li> </ul>	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	
Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation	No active management program for habitat improvement.		Undertake proactive management to improve/rehabilitate habitat, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-seed disturbed lands to reduce weeds,</li> <li>Implement native vegetation restoration/enhancement efforts,</li> <li>Implement access/use restrictions on parcels with high habitat value.</li> <li>Supplement fire management funds.</li> </ol>	Same as Alternative A.	Similar to Alternative B, but more limited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding restricted to fire rehabilitation program.</li> </ul>	Same as Alternative A.

**TABLE 2.1-1 MINIDOKA NORTH SIDE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN –FINAL EA ALTERNATIVES**

Area and Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative) <sup>1/1</sup> : Continuation of Existing Management Practices		Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis		Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis	
	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management
IDFG Wildlife Management Contracts	Let contracts remain until they expire. May or may not renew. If renewed, new terms would be developed.	Let contracts remain until they expire; cancel contracts if required for relinquishment and/or disposal process.	Cancel contracts and renegotiate possible new contract or agreement with IDFG. Negotiation will entail looking at all appropriate Study Area parcels, not just past agreement parcels.	Let contracts remain until they expire; cancel contracts if required for relinquishment and/or disposal process. Consider short-term contract or agreement until relinquishment and/or disposal process is complete.	Cancel contracts. Reclamation manages lands formerly under contract to IDFG management.	
Weed Control	Limited actions to manage/control weeds (in accordance with IPM Plan to be developed), including cooperation with County and irrigation districts.		Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop and implement an active weed control program in accordance with IPM Plan. Efforts to be focused on areas with high habitat value (especially along watercourses).</li></ul>		Same as Alternative A.	
Cultural Resources						
General	Comply with Sections 106 and 110 of NHPA, with ARPA and NAGPRA, and regulations implementing these laws.		Same as Alternative A.		Same as Alternative A.	
Identification & Evaluation	Complete archaeological surveys in previously unsurveyed areas when new ground disturbing actions are proposed. Complete test excavations at archaeological sites if needed. Complete tribal consultations to determine if TCP's are present in areas of new ground disturbing actions, or are in or near focused use areas.		Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Complete Section 110 (i.e., proactive) archaeological surveys.</li></ul>		Same as Alternative A.	

**TABLE 2.1-1 MINIDOKA NORTH SIDE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN –FINAL EA ALTERNATIVES**

Area and Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative) <sup>1/2</sup> : Continuation of Existing Management Practices		Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis		Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis	
	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management
Protection	Unless justified, develop no new features or implement no new ground-disturbing actions within the boundaries of a National Register-eligible archaeological site or TCP. Design projects to avoid or minimize resource damage.  Monitor Register-eligible or unevaluated sites or TCPs in or near focused use areas to allow early detection of damage.  Implement management or mitigative actions to address identified adverse effects on Register-eligible sites or TCPs.  In the event of discovery of human remains of Indian origin, or other cultural items that fall under the purview of NAGPRA, complete tribal consultation procedures as required by 45 CFR 10.  In the event that future actions generate archaeological collections, curate those collections in accordance with 36 CFR 79 and 411 DM, which define Federal requirements.		Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Include cultural resource protection strategies in IDPR Lake Walcott State Park Management Plan.</li></ul>		Same as Alternative A.	
Indian Sacred Sites						
Indian Sacred Sites	Comply with EO 13007 for any new undertakings on Federal land. Consult with tribes for new actions that have potential to affect sacred sites.  Seek to avoid adversely affecting sacred sites, and to accommodate tribal access and use, when consistent with agency mission and law.		Same as Alternative A.		Same as Alternative A.	

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	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management
Indian Trust Assets						
Indian Trust Assets (ITAs)	Consult on actions that may adversely affect ITAs.		Same as Alternative A.		Same as Alternative A.	
Recreation and Access						
Vehicular and Non-Vehicular Access	Enforce existing regulations. Educate public that motorized vehicular use is prohibited on Reclamation lands off of designated roads.		Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and implement an Access Management Plan;</li><li>• Designate and formalize vehicular and non-vehicular trails and access routes;</li><li>• Prohibit access to areas with high habitat values. Areas not designated as roads in the plan are off limits/closed to vehicular use.</li></ul>		Same as Alternative B, but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access Management Plan would not focus on habitat protection.</li><li>• Greater access provided for multiple uses at established sites, relative to Alternative B (more existing roads would be open than under Alternative B).</li></ul>	
Concentrated Shooting/Target Practice	Prohibit concentrated shooting/target practice on Reclamation lands as required except as formally authorized by Reclamation policy (see Reclamation Manual ENV 02-07).		Same as Alternative A.		Same as Alternative A.	
Lake Walcott State Park	Continued management under agreement with IDPR for operation and maintenance of the park, but without a management plan in place.	Not Applicable.	Same as Alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In coordination with IDPR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, prepare and implement a Historic Preservation and Maintenance Plan for the park and wildlife refuge lands administered by Reclamation, outlining vegetation preservation/protection, use areas, hardscape areas, etc.</li></ul>	Not Applicable.	Same as Alternative B.	Not Applicable.



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	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management
Day Use Sites	Lack of formalized management of sites would continue where ad hoc day use is occurring; no services or facilities provided. No development.		Increase management oversight at areas where ad hoc day use is occurring. Actively seek a non-Federal partner to provide more active management and facilities at selected day use sites outside the park boundaries. Consider compatible concession/recreation permits. Implement management strategies at Bishop's Hole, including providing minimum basic facilities (e.g., organized access and parking, accessible toilet facility) in coordination with the results and implementation of the spillway study. Monitor use and conditions to protect resources.	Not Applicable.	Same as Alternative B.	

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Area and Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative) <sup>/1/</sup> : Continuation of Existing Management Practices		Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis		Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis	
	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management	Retain for Project Purposes Long-term Management	Not needed for Project Purposes Interim Management
Camping	Lack of formalized management of ad hoc camping would continue at undeveloped, dispersed sites. No developed sites outside of State Park. Camping prohibited at sites with known cultural resources.		Increase management oversight at areas where ad hoc camping is occurring to protect resources and avoid land use conflicts; no services or facilities to be provided.  No developed camping outside of State Park.  No camping allowed at Bishop's Hole.		Not Applicable.	Actively seek a non-Federal partner to provide more active management and facilities at selected dispersed campsites, such as Bishop's Hole.

**Notes:**

<sup>/1/</sup> Alternative A is the No Action Alternative as required under NEPA. In this case, if implemented, it would mean continuing to manage the Reclamation parcels according to existing agreements and under current Federal laws and regulations. It is important to note that Alternative A is not necessarily a "status quo" situation. Rather, Alternative A would be a continuation of existing Reclamation, and where applicable managing partner management of these lands without benefit of a comprehensive management plan.

Any new or renovated facilities will be designed in accordance with current standards for accessibility for persons with disabilities.

## 2.2 Alternatives Considered in Detail

The three alternatives identified in Section 2.1 and summarized in Table 2.1-1 are described in the remainder of this chapter. The impacts of each alternative are described in Chapter 3, *Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences*. These alternatives are an important part of the planning process because they allow for a thorough exploration of a range of options and an analysis of the potential environmental impacts that may result from implementation.

### 2.2.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative): Continuation of Existing Management Practices

Alternative A is the No Action Alternative as required under NEPA. If implemented, it would mean continuing to manage Reclamation lands according to existing agreements and under current laws and regulations. It is important to note that Alternative A is not necessarily a status quo or “do nothing” situation. Rather, Alternative A would be continued management of the Minidoka North Side parcels on an ad hoc basis, without benefit of a comprehensive management plan. Some specific highlights of this alternative include the following:

- Agricultural leases would continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis, and only when contributing to the closure of drain wells.
- Existing grazing leases will be considered for renewal, but no new grazing leases would be considered.
- Sand and gravel extraction would continue to be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
- Required actions to avoid impacts to and facilitate recovery of Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed species would be implemented.
- No active management program would be undertaken related to habitat improvement.
- Reclamation would begin to enforce existing regulations and educate the public that motorized vehicular use is prohibited on Reclamation lands off designated roads.
- Lack of formalized management of sites would continue where ad hoc day use is occurring; and no services or facilities provided.

As discussed in Chapter 1, *Purpose and Need for Action*, the land parcels in the Minidoka North Side RMP Study Area were identified for retention or relinquishment and/or disposal in a separate process and those designations may change, as needed to provide for Project purposes. The designation of the parcels will not change for any of these alternatives. Therefore, relinquishment and/or disposal of certain parcels would still occur under Alternative A. Figure 2.2-1, *Minidoka North Side Land Base and Parcels to Be Relinquished*, shows all parcels and which parcels are currently identified for relinquishment and/or disposal.

### 2.2.1.1 Retain for Project Purposes: Long-term Management

#### Land Use and Management

##### *Agricultural Leases*

New leases would only be considered when Project purposes dictate and where water rights are legally appropriated.

##### *Grazing Leases*

Only existing grazing leases would be considered for renewal, and no new leases would be permitted.

##### *Sand and Gravel Extraction/Sites*

Sand and gravel sites would be considered on a case-by-case basis, where such activities would not conflict with Reclamation needs.

##### *Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)*

Municipal uses would not be accommodated under Alternative A for parcels that are retained for Project purposes. This option only pertains to relinquishment and/or disposal of lands not needed for Project purposes.

##### *Pest Control (insects/rodents)*

Reclamation would prepare, implement, and follow the recommendations of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan. This plan would include aquatic, terrestrial, and airborne (mosquitoes) pests.

##### *Trespass and Encroachments*

Trespass and encroachment issues would continue to be monitored and addressed on a case-by-case basis. Potential actions include signage and public education (such as through development of a brochure). Reclamation would work to eliminate existing trespass.

##### *Unauthorized Uses (including dumping)*

Reclamation would monitor and address dumping and other unauthorized uses on a case-by-case basis. Current management actions include dump cleanup and closures.

##### *Fire Management*

Reclamation would develop and implement a comprehensive fire management plan, including agreements for fire prevention, fuels management, and land rehabilitation. The goals of the plan would be to protect, restore, and enhance the natural resource values of RMP lands, as well as address public safety-related concerns.

##### *Public Information*

No new public outreach activities would be implemented, beyond maintaining the existing interpretive facilities at Lake Walcott State Park and notices at the Cinder Pit site (using tools such as news releases and signs).

Insert Figure 2.2-1, *Minidoka North Side Land Base and Parcels to Be Relinquished*

11 x 17, front

Insert Figure 2.2-1, *Minidoka North Side Land Base and Parcels to Be Relinquished*

11 x 17, back

## Natural Resources

### *Federal and State Listed and Sensitive Species*

Under Alternative A, Reclamation would implement required actions to avoid impacts to and facilitate recovery of ESA-listed species. No actions beyond those required would be taken.

### *Wetlands*

On lands retained for Project purposes, Reclamation would continue to create drain water wetlands to manage drain water and facilitate closure of groundwater injection wells on a case-by-case basis. It is the intent to close all drain water injection wells by the end of calendar year 2006.

### *Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation*

Under Alternative A, no active management program for habitat improvement would be undertaken.

### *IDFG Wildlife Management Contracts*

Under Alternative A, contracts would remain in place until they expire. Reclamation would choose whether or not to renew the contracts. If renewed, new terms would be developed.

### *Weed Control*

Reclamation would conduct limited actions to manage and control weeds (in accordance with the IPM Plan that is to be developed). Such actions would include cooperation with the counties and local irrigation districts.

## Cultural Resources

### *General*

Reclamation would comply with Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), with the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and NAGPRA, and regulations implementing these laws.

### *Identification and Evaluation*

Reclamation's approach to cultural resources identification and evaluation would be to conduct such activities only when needed, for example, only completing archaeological surveys in previously unsurveyed areas when new ground disturbing actions are proposed. Reclamation would also complete test excavations at archaeological sites if needed. In areas of new ground disturbing actions, or locations that are in or near focused use areas, Reclamation would complete tribal consultations to determine if TCP's are present.

### *Protection*

Reclamation would not develop any new features, or implement any new ground-disturbing actions, within the boundaries of a National Register of Historic Places (National Register)-eligible archaeological site or TCP, unless justified. If such an action is justified, Reclamation would design projects to avoid or minimize resource damage. In accordance with Federal laws, Reclamation would monitor Register-eligible or unevaluated sites or TCPs in or near focused use

areas to allow early detection of damage, and implement management or mitigative actions to address identified adverse effects on Register-eligible sites or TCPs. If human remains of Indian origin, or other cultural items that fall under the purview of NAGPRA are discovered, Reclamation would complete tribal consultation procedures as required by 45 CFR 10. In the event that future actions generate archaeological collections, Reclamation would curate those collections in accordance with 36 CFR 79 and 411 DM, which define Federal requirements.

### **Indian Sacred Sites**

For any new undertakings on Federal land, Reclamation would comply with Executive Order (EO) 13007, and consult with tribes for new actions that have potential to affect sacred sites. Reclamation would also seek to avoid adversely affecting sacred sites, and to accommodate Tribal access and use, when consistent with agency mission and law.

### **Indian Trust Assets**

Reclamation would consult with the Tribes on actions that may adversely affect Indian Trust Assets (ITAs).

### **Recreation and Access**

#### ***Vehicular and Non-Vehicular Access***

Under Alternative A, Reclamation would continue to enforce existing regulations. Reclamation would educate the public that, by Federal regulation, motorized vehicular use is prohibited on Reclamation lands off designated roads.

#### ***Concentrated Shooting/Target Practice***

Prohibit concentrated shooting/target practice on Reclamation lands as required except as formally authorized by Reclamation policy (see Reclamation Manual ENV 02-07).

#### ***Lake Walcott State Park***

Under Alternative A, Reclamation would continue the existing ad hoc approach to management without the benefit of a plan.

#### ***Day Use Sites***

The lack of formalized management of sites would continue where ad hoc day use is occurring. No services or facilities would be provided, and no development would take place.

#### ***Camping***

The lack of formalized management of ad hoc camping would continue at undeveloped, dispersed sites. No sites would be developed outside of the State Park. Camping would be prohibited at sites with known cultural resources.



### 2.2.1.2 Not Needed for Project Purposes: Interim Management

Under Alternative A, all management activities listed for parcels that will be retained for Project purposes also apply to parcels that are not needed for Project purposes, at least on an interim basis, with the following exceptions:

- Land Use and Management
  - Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)
  - Public Information
- Natural Resources
  - Wetlands
  - IDFG Wildlife Management Contracts

These exceptions are described below.

#### Land Use and Management

##### *Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)*

Municipal uses are not considered for parcels that are being retained for Project purposes. However, parcels that will be managed on an interim basis for future relinquishment and/or disposal may be eligible for such uses. Reclamation will consider municipal uses on a case-by-case basis within their authority.

##### *Public Information*

Public information activities will be conducted for some parcels that will be retained, but not for parcels that are identified for relinquishment and/or disposal.

#### Natural Resources

##### *Wetlands*

No wetlands development will take place on lands that are not needed for Project purposes. Part of the screening process for what parcels would be retained was whether or not the parcel was in a suitable location for a potential future wetland. If the parcel did not meet this criteria, it was considered for relinquishment and/or disposal.

##### *IDFG Wildlife Management Contract*

Contracts would remain until they expire. If required for relinquishment and/or disposal process, contracts would be cancelled.

## **2.2.2 Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis**

This alternative emphasizes improving implementation of Reclamation's regulations and policies as they relate to the Minidoka North Side lands while providing for natural and cultural resource enhancement in priority areas. Recreation-related development on these lands would require the need for a public entity non-Federal managing partner. Natural resource related activities would

be undertaken according to a prioritized schedule and some would be implemented working under a new MOU with IDFG. It is anticipated that some specific highlights of this alternative include the following:

- No new agricultural leases would be issued except for over-riding Project benefits, and new leases would only be issued if there are no impacts to natural or cultural resources, or threatened and endangered species, and if water rights are legally appropriated.
- New grazing leases would be considered on designated parcels, based on natural and cultural resource values (that is, areas with low habitat values and no cultural resource values).
- Sand and gravel extraction would be considered on a case-by-case basis where it does not conflict with other Reclamation needs or priority natural resource values.
- Facilitate recovery of state-listed and sensitive species as well as implementing required actions to avoid impacts to and facilitate recovery of species listed under the ESA.
- Actively improve habitat values by re-seeding disturbed lands to reduce weeds, implementing native vegetation restoration/enhancement efforts, and implementing access/use restrictions with areas with high habitat value.
- An Access Management Plan would be prepared and implemented designating which routes would be considered roads. Areas with high habitat values would be closed to vehicular use.
- Minimum basic facilities would be provided at selected day use areas, such as Bishop's Hole.

A key management difference between Alternatives B and C is the amount of land on which grazing would be considered. Figure 2.2-2, *Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis—Grazing*, shows the entire RMP Study Area and highlights which parcels would be considered for grazing under this alternative.

#### **2.2.2.1 Retain for Project Purposes: Long-term Management**

##### **Land Use and Management**

###### ***Agricultural Leases***

Similar to Alternative A, new agricultural leases would only be considered for over-riding Project benefits and where water rights are legally appropriated. Additionally, such leases would only be considered if there will be no impacts to natural or cultural resources, or to threatened and endangered species.

###### ***Grazing Leases***

New grazing leases would be considered on designated parcels that do not affect Project operations and maintenance. Criteria would include protection or improvement of natural and cultural resource values and addressing water quality concerns. Reclamation would also consider grazing as a potential fire management tool for cheatgrass parcels. Reclamation would implement a grazing lease monitoring schedule and protocols for all parcels that are leased.

Insert Figure 2.2-2, *Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis—Grazing*

(11 x 17 front)

*Insert Figure 2.2-2, Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis—Grazing*

(11 x 17 back)

### *Sand and Gravel Extraction/Sites*

Reclamation would consider allowing sand and gravel sites on a case-by-case basis where it does not conflict with other Reclamation needs or affect priority natural and cultural resource values.

### *Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)*

Same as Alternative A, municipal uses can only take place on parcels that are identified for relinquishment and/or disposal. Such uses are not applicable for long-term management parcels.

### *Pest Control (insects/rodents)*

Same as Alternative A, pest control would follow the recommendations of the IPM Plan that would be developed for this area.

### *Trespass and Encroachments*

Same as Alternative A, problems will be monitored and addressed on a case-by-case basis and Reclamation would work to eliminate trespass. Under Alternative B, such actions would be prioritized. Trespass and encroachment would be eliminated through the following actions:

1. Establishing a priority list of trespasses to resolve.
2. Surveying sites to determine the extent of trespasses.
3. Updating the geographic information system (GIS) maps and data.
4. Increasing enforcement, including notifications and fines.
5. Working with landowners involved in unauthorized use (trespass) of Reclamation land to eliminate that use and to rehabilitate and re-seed Reclamation land that has been disturbed, when appropriate.
6. Monitoring to prevent future trespass.
7. Reclamation will publicize the Crime Witness Program, which provides rewards for reporting illegal and unauthorized use of Reclamation land.

### *Unauthorized Uses (including dumping)*

Similar to the process described above for trespass and encroachment, Reclamation would survey sites to determine and define the extent of the problem. For dump sites, Reclamation would characterize contents and prioritize cleanup, as well as attempt to determine responsible parties. Reclamation would also conduct monitoring to prevent future dumping. In addition, Reclamation would advertise and post signs about the Crime Witness Program and a toll-free number for reporting illegal and unauthorized uses on Reclamation land.

### *Fire Management*

Same as Alternative A, Reclamation would develop and implement a fire management plan.

### ***Public Information***

In addition to the interpretive facilities at Lake Walcott State Park and the signage for the Cinder Pit described under Alternative A, Alternative B would include additional signage to emphasize natural and cultural resource values, recreation access, and no dumping. This signage would be placed on priority parcels as appropriate. In addition, Reclamation would advertise and post signs about the Crime Witness Program and a toll-free number for reporting illegal and unauthorized uses on Reclamation land.

### **Natural Resources**

#### ***Federal and State Listed and Sensitive Species***

Alternative B would go further in the protection of sensitive species than Alternative A by taking the additional measure of cooperating in the recovery of Idaho Conservation Data Center- and BLM-listed and sensitive species.

#### ***Wetlands***

Wetlands that contribute to drain water management facilitate closure of groundwater injection wells and would continue to be created under Alternative B, just like under Alternative A. It is the intent to close all drain water injection wells by the end of calendar year 2006. In addition, Reclamation would continue to implement actions specifically to improve or increase wetlands habitat value, in conjunction and when compatible with drain water management. This includes coordination with partners such as Ducks Unlimited.

#### ***Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation***

Unlike Alternative A, under Alternative B Reclamation would undertake proactive management to improve and rehabilitate habitat, including the following:

- Re-seed disturbed lands to reduce weeds
- Implement native vegetation restoration/ enhancement efforts
- Implement access/use restrictions on parcels with high habitat value
- Supplement fire management funds

#### ***IDFG Management Contracts***

Contracts would be cancelled, and potential new contracts or agreements would be considered with IDFG. Negotiation would entail looking at all appropriate Study Area parcels, not just past agreement parcels. Parcels would be identified and prioritized based on wildlife habitat values and/or potential water availability with water rights legally appropriated.

#### ***Weed Control***

In addition to cooperating with local weed control districts as described for Alternative A, Reclamation would also develop and implement an active weed control program in accordance with an IPM Plan. Efforts would be focused on areas with high habitat value, especially along watercourses.

## Cultural Resources

### *General*

Same as Alternative A, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

### *Identification and Evaluation*

Alternative A specifies a more reactive mode of only conducting archeological surveys as needed. Under Alternative B, Reclamation would complete Section 110 (more proactive) archaeological surveys.

### *Protection*

In addition to the protection offered under Alternative A, Reclamation would include cultural resource protection strategies in the IDPR Lake Walcott State Park Management Plan.

## Indian Sacred Sites

Same as Alternative A, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

## Indian Trust Assets

Same as Alternative A, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

## Recreation and Access

### *Vehicular and Non-Vehicular Access*

Existing regulations would be enforced and the public education process would take place to eliminate motorized vehicle traffic off designated roads, as described for Alternative A. In addition, Reclamation would develop and implement an Access Management Plan, designate and formalize vehicular and non-vehicular trails and access routes, and prohibit access to areas with high habitat values. Areas not designated as roads in the plan would be closed to vehicular use.

### *Concentrated Shooting/Target Practice*

Same as Alternative A, Reclamation does not allow concentrated shooting or target practice on any of their lands, except as authorized. Prohibit concentrated shooting/target practice on Reclamation lands as required except as formally authorized by Reclamation policy (see Reclamation Manual ENV 02-07).

### *Lake Walcott State Park*

In coordination with IDPR, Reclamation would prepare and implement a Historic Preservation and Maintenance Plan for the park outlining vegetation preservation and protection, recreation use areas, hardscape areas, and other park features.

### *Day Use Sites*

Under Alternative B, Reclamation would increase management oversight at areas where ad hoc day use is occurring. At selected day use sites, Reclamation would actively seek a public entity non-Federal partner to provide more active management and facilities. As part of this, Reclamation would consider compatible concession or recreation permits. In all of these areas, Reclamation would monitor use and conditions to protect natural and cultural resources.

At Bishop's Hole, Reclamation would implement management strategies, including providing minimum basic facilities such as organized access and parking and an accessible toilet facility. This would be developed in coordination with the results and implementation of the Minidoka Dam spillway study, which may dictate future use of this location as a staging area for spillway reconstruction.

### *Camping*

No developed camping would be allowed outside of Lake Walcott State Park. This camping restriction includes Bishop's Hole (parcel number 925-5-A would be day use only). Reclamation would increase management oversight at areas where ad hoc camping is occurring to protect resources and avoid land use conflicts. No services or facilities would be provided.

### 2.2.2.2 Not Needed for Project Purposes: Interim Management

Under Alternative B, all management activities listed for parcels that will be retained for Project purposes also apply to parcels that are not needed for Project purposes, with some limited exceptions. Management exceptions occur for the following resources under Alternative B:

- Land Use and Management
  - Agricultural Leases
  - Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)
  - Public Information
- Natural Resources
  - Wetlands
  - Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation
  - IDFG Wildlife Management Contracts

These exceptions are described below.

### **Land Use and Management**

#### *Agricultural Leases*

No agricultural leases would be issued on parcels slated for relinquishment and/or disposal.

#### *Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)*

Municipal uses would be considered on a case-by-case basis and evaluated based on natural and cultural resource values, if applicable.

#### *Public Information*

Public information efforts would be focused on signage to prevent dumping and unauthorized use. Any other signage would be minimal and only provided if needed.



## Natural Resources

### *Wetlands*

Drain water wetlands would continue to be created as under Alternative A. No additional actions, such as those described for long-term management of parcels, would be conducted for parcels that are identified for relinquishment and/or disposal.

### *Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation*

As with Alternative A, no active management program for habitat improvement would be conducted.

### *IDFG Wildlife Management Contracts*

Contracts would remain in place until they expire. If required for relinquishment and/or disposal process, contracts would be canceled. Reclamation would consider short-term contracts or agreements until the relinquishment and/or disposal process is complete.

## 2.2.3 Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis

Similar to Alternative B, this alternative also emphasizes improving implementation of Reclamation's regulations and policies as they relate to the Minidoka North Side lands. However, Alternative C emphasizes providing for increased accommodation of various uses on Reclamation lands. Recreation-related activities would require the need for a public entity non-Federal managing partner to an even greater degree under this alternative than for Alternative B. Like Alternative B, natural resource-related activities would be undertaken according to a prioritized schedule and some would be implemented working under a new MOU with IDFG. However, emphasis would be placed more on multiple uses of appropriate Reclamation lands and less on improving and restoring natural resource values. Some specific highlights of this alternative include the following:

- New agricultural leases would be considered on a case-by-case basis, and allowed if no impacts to cultural resources or threatened and endangered species are anticipated, and where water rights are legally appropriated.
- New grazing leases would be considered on any parcels that don't affect operations and maintenance, and natural and cultural resource values. Also, grazing would be considered as a potential fire management tool.
- Sand and gravel extraction would be considered on a case-by-case basis as in Alternative A.
- Required actions would be implemented to avoid impacts to and facilitate recovery of ESA-listed species as in Alternative A.
- Actions to improve habitat values would be similar to Alternative B, but more limited, and restricted to a fire rehabilitation program.
- Similar to Alternative B, an Access Management Plan would be prepared and implemented, but with a focus on multiple uses at established sites.

- Public entity non-Federal managing partner(s) would be sought to provide more active management and facilities and services at selected day use sites, such as Bishop's Hole and parcels along the Snake River.

A primary difference between Alternatives B and C is grazing management. Figure 2.2-3, *Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis—Grazing*, shows which parcels would be considered for grazing.

### **2.2.3.1 Retain for Project Purposes: Long-term Management**

#### **Land Use and Management**

##### ***Agricultural Leases***

Reclamation would consider new leases on a case-by-case basis. The key criterion is whether there is a benefit to Project purposes and where water rights are legally appropriated. New leases will be issued only if there are no impacts to cultural resources and threatened and endangered species.

##### ***Grazing Leases***

New grazing leases would be considered on additional designated parcels that do not affect operations and maintenance and do not degrade natural and cultural resource and water quality values. Therefore, under Alternative C, a greater number of parcels are considered available for grazing than under Alternative B, but many of the same restrictions apply. Also, grazing would be considered as a potential fire management tool for cheatgrass parcels.

##### ***Sand and Gravel Extraction/Sites***

Same as Alternative A, sand and gravel sites would be considered on a case-by-case basis where this use does not conflict with Reclamation's Project purposes.

##### ***Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)***

Same as Alternatives A and B, municipal uses can only take place on parcels that are identified for relinquishment and/or disposal. Such uses are not applicable for long-term management.

##### ***Pest Control (insects/rodents)***

Same as Alternatives A and B, pest control would follow the recommendations of the IPM Plan that would be developed for the Study Area.

##### ***Trespass and Encroachments***

Same as Alternative B, Reclamation would undertake actions to eliminate trespass and encroachment according to a prioritized list.

##### ***Unauthorized Uses (including dumping)***

Same as Alternative B, Reclamation would survey and clean up dumping sites using a process similar to that used for trespass and encroachments.

Insert Figure 2.2-3, *Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis—Grazing*

(11 x 17, front)

Insert Figure 2.2-3, *Alternative C: Multiple Use Emphasis—Grazing*

(11 x 17, back)

### *Fire Management*

Same as Alternatives A and B, Reclamation would develop a comprehensive fire management plan.

### *Public Information*

The signage and management actions described under Alternatives A and B would also be applied under Alternative C. In addition, Reclamation would provide signage to emphasize safety and regulations as a result of multiple use activities.

### *Natural Resources*

#### *Federal and State Listed and Sensitive Species*

As with Alternative A, Reclamation would implement Federally required actions for protection of ESA-listed species.

#### *Wetlands*

Drain water wetlands would be created as needed to close groundwater injection wells, as described for Alternative A.

#### *Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation*

Management actions taken under Alternative C would be similar to Alternative B, but more limited. Funding for habitat improvements and rehabilitation would be restricted to the fire rehabilitation program.

#### *IDFG Wildlife Management Contracts*

Contracts would be cancelled. Reclamation would manage lands formerly under contract to IDFG management.

#### *Weed Control*

Reclamation's approach to weed control under Alternative C would be the same as Alternative A, and consist of compliance with the IPM Plan and cooperation with the counties and irrigation districts.

### *Cultural Resources*

#### *General*

Same as Alternatives A and B, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

#### *Identification and Evaluation*

Same as Alternative A, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

#### *Protection*

Same as Alternative A, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

### *Indian Sacred Sites*

Same as Alternatives A and B, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

## **Indian Trust Assets**

Same as Alternatives A and B, Reclamation would comply with Federal laws and regulations.

## **Recreation and Access**

### ***Vehicular and Non-Vehicular Access***

Access would be similar to Alternative B, but the Access Management Plan would not focus on habitat protection. Also, greater access would be provided for multiple uses at established sites, relative to Alternative B. Therefore, more existing roads would be open than under Alternative B.

### ***Concentrated Shooting/Target Practice***

Target practice and concentrated shooting would be prohibited according to Reclamation policy as with Alternatives A and B.

### ***Lake Walcott State Park***

The state park would be managed as described in Alternative B through the development of a Historic Preservation and Maintenance Plan with IDPR.

### ***Day Use Sites***

All of the management oversight and action strategies would be the same as Alternative B. This includes seeking a public entity non-Federal cost share partner for selected day use sites, and providing minimum basic facilities at Bishop's Hole in coordination with the Minidoka Dam spillway study.

### ***Camping***

Reclamation would actively seek a public entity non-Federal partner to provide more active management and development of facilities at selected dispersed campsites, such as Bishop's Hole.

## **2.2.3.2 Not Needed for Project Purposes: Interim Management**

Under Alternative C, all management activities listed for parcels that will be retained for Project purposes also apply to parcels that are not needed for Project purposes, with some limited exceptions. Management exceptions occur for the following resources under Alternative C:

- Land Use and Management
  - Agricultural Leases
  - Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)
- Natural Resources
  - Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation

These exceptions are described below.

## **Land Use and Management**

### ***Agricultural Leases***

No agricultural leases would be permitted on parcels slated for relinquishment and/or disposal.

*Accommodation of Municipal Uses (i.e., resulting in relinquishment and/or disposal of Reclamation lands)*

Same as Alternative B, municipal uses would be considered on a case-by-case basis and evaluated based on natural and cultural resource values.

*Public Information*

Same as Alternative B, public information efforts would be focused on signage to prevent dumping and unauthorized use. Any other signage would be minimal and only provided if needed.

**Natural Resources**

*Habitat Improvements and Rehabilitation*

As with Alternative A, no active management program for habitat improvement would be conducted on parcels that are identified for relinquishment and/or disposal.

## 2.3 Alternative Elements Eliminated from Consideration

Early in the alternatives development process, Reclamation's Planning Team assumed that only two alternatives would be needed: the No Action Alternative, and one action alternative describing the differing management scenarios for parcels that meet Project purposes and would be retained for long-term management versus those that are identified for relinquishment and/or disposal and would be managed on an interim basis. However, discussions with the AHWG indicated that a wide range of management scenarios could be applied to the parcels that are retained for long-term management. For example, different levels of grazing were desired, ranging from no grazing on any parcels to more intensive grazing for fire management. Some members of the public felt that Reclamation should develop more recreation facilities, while others encouraged less development, should the lands be needed in the future for irrigation facilities. Because of this wide range of opinion, the Reclamation Planning Team developed the two action alternatives that were presented in this chapter: one emphasizing resource preservation and protection (Alternative B), and another emphasizing more multiple uses of the parcels (Alternative C).

Most of the elements suggested by the public were included in one or more of the action alternatives. Other elements discussed included working with a partner to develop a formal target practice area at the Cinder Pit, allowing land exchanges or offering a general amnesty for farmers that are trespassing on Reclamation lands, and formalizing and providing for camping facilities outside of Lake Walcott State Park. These elements were reviewed, discussed, and analyzed among the AHWG members and the Reclamation Planning Team members but were eliminated from further consideration because of a lack of authority, conflicts with standard Reclamation policies, potential high costs, high potential for conflict with natural resources, and conflicts among users.

## 2.4 Summary of Impacts

The impact analysis is presented in Chapter 3. A summary of these impacts is provided in Table 2.4-1.

TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

<b>Resource Topic</b>	<b>Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices</b>	<b>Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis</b>	<b>Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis</b>
Soils	Addressing trespass on a case by case basis and enforcing motorized use regulations would result in improvement in soil productivity where compaction and erosion potential would be reduced by limiting vehicle access. Implementing a comprehensive fire management program would reduce erosion and productivity losses because fires could be avoided or minimized under this program.	In addition to the reductions under Alternative A, existing erosion and soil productivity losses would be further reduced with implementation of the Preferred Alternative. This improvement would come mainly from increased ORV management and Access Management Plan development, a more active weed control program, better trespass management, proactive improvement of habitat, and management of recreation sites.	Conditions as described for the Preferred Alternative would apply to Alternative C, except more roads would be open and less habitat improved, which could result in higher levels of runoff and subsequent erosion.
Water Quality and Contaminants	Implementation of Alternative A would result in some beneficial impacts to water quality as Reclamation continues to create drain water wetlands to manage drain water and facilitate closure of groundwater injection wells on a case-by-case basis as funds are available.	Implementation of Alternative B would result in similar benefits to water quality as the No Action Alternative. However, there is greater focus under Alternative B to implement actions specifically to improve/increase wetlands habitat value.	Implementation of Alternative C would result in similar minor benefits to water quality as the No Action Alternative.



TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis	Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis
Vegetation	Continuation of actions such as new agricultural leases, siting of sand and gravel extraction, a limited weed control approach, the lack of management and enforcement of ad hoc camping and motorized vehicle use of the parcels, and the resulting higher fire potential, would all have adverse impacts on native plant communities. The area of Reclamation lands that would be directly impacted by these activities is relatively low, probably less than 500 acres. Off-road driving under this alternative is likely to continue at present levels or increase into areas that currently have native vegetation, which removes vegetation cover and increases the likelihood of human-caused fires. Ad-hoc camping impacts vegetation by both directly damaging or destroying it and indirectly by increasing the potential for weed dispersion and increased risk of fires, with the same consequences as described above.	Alternative B focuses on the protection and enhancement of natural resource values. This would be a priority for all activities, which would minimize or avoid many of the impacts on native plant communities associated with Alternative A. Grazing would be limited and considered on only about 330 acres with native vegetation. Actions specifically aimed at improving wetland plants (wildlife habitat) would be implemented if cooperating partners such as Ducks Unlimited are identified. If successful, these efforts would increase the extent of wetland plants at drain water wetlands. A focus on weed control near high value habitats under this alternative would likely slow or halt the degradation of native plant communities. Major active habitat improvements and rehabilitation are planned that would benefit native plant communities. Compared to Alternatives A or C, reduced vehicular access is likely to result in less driving off-road into areas with native vegetation. This would lessen the potential that parcels with native vegetation would be degraded or destroyed by use or human-caused fire. Increased efforts to control ad-hoc camping would occur under Alternative B, thereby possibly reducing the potential for human-caused fires compared to Alternatives A or C. A proactive habitat restoration program would be implemented under Alternative B to improve and rehabilitate degraded native vegetation. Alternative B includes unspecified efforts to recover rare species.	Avoidance of impacts on natural resources, including sensitive species, would not be a priority under Alternative C. Therefore, actions such as new agricultural leases, sand and gravel extraction, more limited weed control, and less management of ORV use and the resulting higher fire potential have a higher likelihood of adversely affecting native plant communities than under Alternative B. Alternative C could also permit grazing on 567 acres of perennial grasslands compared to 209 acres under Alternative B and none under Alternative A. In addition, this alternative could allow grazing on 1,369 acres of native sagebrush grassland vegetation. Funding to rehabilitate and improve native vegetation and habitat would be restricted to funds available for fire rehabilitation. This would mean less restoration or rehabilitation of native plant communities than under Alternative B. Continuation of ad-hoc camping at dispersed sites as well as no priority for native vegetation protection and more open roads within the Access Management Plan would allow continued degradation of native vegetation and substantially increase the risk of fires compared to Alternative B. Alternative C does not include specific provisions to avoid impacts to sensitive species or to actively work toward their recovery. Potential impacts would be similar to those described under Alternative A.

TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis	Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis
Wildlife	Several actions that would be continued under Alternative A have the potential of impacting wildlife habitat values. Potential impacts include direct habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, and disturbance of wildlife. As a result of new agricultural leases, siting of sand and gravel extraction sites, the location of drain water wetlands, and the lack of management and enforcement of ad hoc camping and motorized vehicle use of the parcels. Weed control efforts would not increase substantially compared to current efforts. This is likely to result in continued slow spread of weeds on Reclamation parcels, resulting in degraded wildlife habitat values. By far the greatest potential current and future impact of ad-hoc day use or camping and ORV use would result from fires in areas with higher wildlife habitat values. Fires result in the immediate loss of sagebrush and other shrubs that are essential for sagebrush obligate species such as sage grouse, pygmy rabbits, and Brewer's sparrows as well as many other wildlife species. Sensitive wildlife species and their habitats could be adversely affected by actions such as disturbance during the breeding season and habitat loss and fragmentation from ORV use and fires caused by careless human use of Reclamation parcels.	Alternative B focuses on the protection and enhancement of natural resource values. This would be a priority for all activities, which would minimize or avoid many of the impacts to wildlife associated with Alternative A. Generally, lands with higher wildlife habitat values would not be converted to or degraded by other uses. Livestock grazing would be considered on about 330 acres with native vegetation, where cheatgrass is a component of sagebrush dominated landscapes. Grazing on these parcels would degrade wildlife habitat values by removing native plants including grasses and forbs. The improvements to vegetation listed above would also improve wildlife habitat values. Alternative B includes development and implementation of an Access Management Plan to control and restrict motorized vehicle use of parcels with higher wildlife habitat values. This would lessen the potential that parcels with native vegetation would be degraded or destroyed by fire and other habitat degradation. The priority for natural resource protection also extends to rare and sensitive species. All actions that have the potential of adversely affecting sensitive species would only be implemented after appropriate habitat evaluations followed by site clearances, if necessary, to assure that sensitive species and their habitats are not impacted. New management agreements with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game for some of the parcels that would be retained could result in improved habitat conditions if water and funding are available to implement habitat improvement measures.	Avoidance of impacts on natural resources, including sensitive species, would not be a priority under Alternative C. Therefore, actions such as new agricultural leases, sand and gravel extraction, more limited weed control, and less management of ORV use and the resulting higher fire potential have a higher likelihood of adversely affecting wildlife and habitat than under Alternative B. Many of the impacts would be similar to those described for Alternative A. Under Alternative C, livestock grazing would be considered on 10,505 acres, including 567 acres of perennial grasslands compared to 209 acres under Alternative B and none under Alternative A. In addition, this alternative could allow grazing on 1,369 acres of native sagebrush grassland vegetation. Wildlife habitat would be degraded by livestock grazing on parcels with native vegetation. More acres of wetlands and playas could also be grazed than under Alternatives A or B. Continuation of ad-hoc camping at dispersed sites, as well as no priority for natural resource protection and more open roads within the Access Management Plan, would allow continued degradation of wildlife habitat and substantially increase the risk of fires compared to Alternative B. Potential impacts on sensitive species would be similar to those described under Alternative A.
Aquatic Biology	If additional drain water wetlands are developed, these would provide more temporary aquatic habitat for frogs and aquatic insects.	Implementation of Alternative B may result in the development of a few additional drain water wetlands compared to Alternative A if funding partners can be found. Similar temporary aquatic habitat benefits would occur. Habitat improvements may be implemented at some existing or future wetlands under Alternative B if funding partners can be found.	Implementation of Alternative C may have the same minor benefits as the No Action Alternative.

TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis	Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis
Threatened, Endangered, Candidate, and Proposed Species	<p>One of the commitments of each of the alternatives is that Reclamation will implement any necessary actions to avoid impacts to and facilitate recovery of ESA-listed species, including proposed and candidate species. Therefore, any permitted actions under all of the alternatives would only be allowed after appropriate site clearances so that potential impacts on listed, proposed, and candidate species would be avoided. If site clearances indicate that a protected species may be present, potential impacts would be avoided by either moving the location of the proposed activity or by not issuing the required permit. Alternative A would have no effect on bald eagles. None of the actions that would continue under Alternative A would have any direct or indirect effects on actual or potential yellow-billed cuckoo habitat. Reclamation actions and allowable public actions including unauthorized vehicle use that may affect pygmy rabbits or suitable pygmy rabbit habitat would be altered or eliminated so as to avoid impacts to pygmy rabbits or suitable pygmy rabbit habitat. This action will substantially minimize, but not completely eliminate, the potential for impacts on pygmy rabbits and actual or potential pygmy rabbit habitat because ad hoc camping and day use would continue. No adverse or beneficial impacts to protected fish or aquatic resources would result from implementation of Alternative A. None of the management actions planned for Alternative A would affect potential Ute ladies'-tresses orchid habitat along the Snake River. Therefore, Alternative A would have no effect on the Ute ladies'-tresses orchid.</p>	<p>There would be no effect on bald eagles or actual or potential habitat. There would be no adverse effects on yellow-billed cuckoos or their actual or potential habitat. Site clearances prior to Reclamation activities would reduce the potential for adverse effects on pygmy rabbits compared to Alternative A. However, potential effects of ad hoc camping and day use would be the same as Alternative A. No adverse or beneficial impacts on protected fish or aquatic resources would result from implementation of Alternative B. Implementation of these measures would avoid all potential impacts on the Ute ladies' tresses orchid and potential habitat and result in a determination of no effect.</p>	<p>All of the impact avoidance measures described for Alternative A would also be implemented under Alternative C, resulting in the same conclusions regarding potential impacts on protected wildlife, aquatic, and plant species.</p>

TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis	Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis
Recreation and Access	Under Alternative A, management of Lake Walcott State Park and Reclamation lands would be without the benefit of a management plan, likely resulting in negligible impacts to recreation resources in the future. Specific proposals related to wetlands may have an indirect beneficial impact on recreation by possibly improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive recreational activities.	Identifying a non-Federal partner to provide more active management and facilities, as proposed in Alternative B, would likely have a beneficial impact to recreation resources. Implementation of an Access Management Plan, as proposed in Alternative B, would likely have both moderate beneficial and adverse impacts on recreation and access, specifically hunting, since Reclamation would increase enforcement of existing regulations related to motorized vehicular use and prohibit vehicular access to areas with high habitat value. Implementation of a Historic Preservation and Maintenance Plan for Lake Walcott State Park would generally have beneficial effects on recreation. Actions proposed under Alternative B would enhance the recreation visitor experience at Bishop's Hole by providing minimum basic facilities such as parking and sanitation facilities. Specific proposals related to wetlands, including coordination with partners such as Ducks Unlimited, would, if successful, have an indirect beneficial impact on recreation by improving habitat for wildlife species and thus improving opportunities for recreational activities, specifically hunting.	In general, actions proposed under Alternative C are similar to those proposed under the other two alternatives; thus, effects are expected to be similar. However, the degree of proposed improvements for recreation resources and for the provision for public safety is greater in Alternative C than in Alternatives A and B. Thus overall, Alternative C would likely provide a slightly greater beneficial impact to recreation resources.
Land Use and Management	Trespass and encroachment would continue to be addressed on a case-by-case basis by consultation with the offending parties as well as through public education. These safeguards that are included in this alternative are expected to be sufficient to avoid adverse impacts on land use and management.	From a land use and management perspective, Alternative B would be an improvement relative to the No Action Alternative because this approach emphasizes strategic and coordinated management.	From a land use and management perspective, Alternative C would be relatively similar to Alternative B in terms of approach and impacts. The multiple use emphasis is expected to generally yield positive rather than negative impacts to land use and management.
Socioeconomics	As a continuation of existing management practices, the No Action Alternative would have little or no direct effect on the local economy, employment, population or demographics. As such, no impacts are expected.	Alternative B would have little or no direct effect on the local economy, employment, population or demographics. No impacts are expected to result from the Preferred Alternative.	If additional land became commercially productive through new leases, this could have very minor positive economic benefits for the Study Area, although population or demographics would not likely be affected.

TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis	Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis
Public Services and Utilities	In general, all three alternatives are nearly identical in terms of public services and utilities and related impacts. Reclamation would develop and implement a comprehensive fire management plan under Alternative A, which would likely improve coordination between resource managers and fire responders resulting in positive impacts. Alternative A contains several provisions affecting law enforcement. These include monitoring Reclamation lands for unauthorized uses such as dumping, beginning to enforce existing vehicular access regulations, and enforcement of prohibitions on concentrated shooting and target practice. Reclamation would continue to allow the irrigation districts to create drain water wetlands on lands retained for Project purposes to manage drain water and facilitate closure of groundwater injection wells on a case-by-case basis. This action would continue to have positive resource impacts.	Like the No Action Alternative, Alternative B would specifically address fire suppression, law enforcement, and irrigation wastewater. Alternative B does include a more proactive approach toward law enforcement. In addition to monitoring unauthorized use problems on a case-by-case basis, implementation of Alternative B would survey sites to determine the extent of the problems, characterize dump contents, prioritize cleanup, and attempt to identify those responsible for the offense. Also, in addition to enforcement of existing vehicular access regulations, implementation of Alternative B would include development and implementation of an Access Management Plan. From a law enforcement perspective, these actions would require greater enforcement efforts by Reclamation and coordinating agencies, but would nonetheless result in associated positive resource impacts.	Alternative C is similar to Alternative B in terms of fire suppression, law enforcement, and irrigation wastewater treatment. The only difference is with regard to access management. In contrast to the more restrictive access provisions included in Alternative B, the Access Management Plan envisioned under Alternative C would not focus on habitat protection and would close fewer access roads.
Environmental Justice	None of the alternatives are expected to affect environmental justice. Therefore, mitigation measures are not necessary because no substantial adverse or residual impacts to environmental justice are expected.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.

TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis	Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis
Cultural Resources	<p>Cultural resources would continue to be identified, protected, and managed on a project-specific basis, in response to individual Reclamation-initiated or Reclamation-sponsored actions that pose a threat to cultural resources. The predominant mode for managing cultural resources would be one of reacting to specific actions on a case-by-case basis, instead of generating protection from within the cultural resources program (that is, a proactive approach). Significant cultural properties would be protected because of legal requirements to do so, not through any agency comprehensive plan or program initiative. Under existing management (as well as the other RMP alternatives), archaeological deposits that are exposed would continue to be degraded by natural forces such as erosion, by vandalism and relic collecting, and by Reclamation-sponsored or initiated actions within the RMP Study Area. Several activities routinely conducted under Alternative A within the RMP area can adversely affect cultural resources because of an informal, unstructured approach that may not consider far-reaching effects to natural and cultural resources. These activities include minimal public information programs; lack of proactive strategies for identifying, evaluating, and protecting cultural resources (i.e., Section 110 activities); lack of a vehicle access plan; continued ad hoc management at Walcott Park without a comprehensive management plan; lack of formalized management at day use sites; and minimal oversight of ad hoc camping.</p>	<p>There is a greater potential for beneficial effects to cultural resources from Alternative B than from Alternative A or Alternative C. Reclamation is required to account for the effects of its actions upon cultural properties under any of the alternatives. However, Alternative B does provide greater opportunities for proactive, non-reactive cultural resource management than either of the other alternatives. Alternative B (and to a lesser extent Alternative C) does not rely on reactions to Reclamation undertakings to trigger protection of cultural resources. Under Alternative B, Section 110 archaeological surveys would be conducted to identify new, previously unrecorded sites. Cultural resource protection would be included in the Lake Walcott State Park Historic Preservation and Maintenance Plan. New agricultural leases would be issued only if there are no impacts to cultural (and other) resources. More controlled and formalized access through an Access Management Plan will reduce inadvertent trampling on cultural resource sites. Increasing management oversight at areas where ad hoc day use and camping is occurring, and confining camping to Lake Walcott State Park, will minimize looting and artifact collection activities. Alternative B provides for a more extensive public information effort than Alternative A does by emphasizing cultural and other values, which could foster an appreciation and respect for those resources.</p>	<p>Impacts resulting from natural agents or human-caused factors would continue under this alternative. However, because Alternative C provides for higher levels expansion of recreation facilities and access than the Alternative B, it does have a greater potential to impact cultural resources, directly and indirectly. Under Alternative C, facilities would be provided at dispersed campsites, actions not envisioned under Alternative B. Alternative C also allows for greater access for multiple uses, resulting in the opening of more roads, causing effects similar to those described above for expanding recreation facilities.</p>

TABLE 2.4-1  
Summary of Impacts

Resource Topic	Alternative A (No Action Alternative)—Continuation of Existing Management Practices	Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)—Resource Protection/Enhancement Emphasis	Alternative C—Multiple Use Emphasis
Indian Sacred Sites	If sacred sites are located in the area of potential effect of a Reclamation Project, their integrity is compromised by actual physical disturbances as well as visual or auditory intrusions resulting in changes in character, feeling, and association of the site. In such cases, their “sacredness” and importance as a religious or sacred site is diminished. As with cultural resources, sacred sites are compromised by vandalism and relic collecting, by land use activities, and recreation and other development.	Alternative B is basically the same as Alternative A. However, because of more focused, controlled, and formalized land use activities—along with the cultural resources protection orientation of this alternative—potential impacts to sacred sites under Alternative B would be less than for Alternative A.	Potential impacts on Indian sacred sites under this alternative would be greater than for Alternative B because of the alternative placing less of an emphasis on cultural resources protection than Alternative B.
Indian Trust Assets	There is no universally accepted understanding as to the specific treaty rights to hunt and fish in the vicinity of the Minidoka North side lands since there has not been a settlement with either the Nez Perce Tribe, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes or the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation as to the extent and nature of their off-reservation hunting and fishing treaty rights. Thus, ITA’s considered are tribal hunting and fishing rights that may exist. Water rights claims or lack of such claims within the Snake River Basin Adjudication are not necessarily determinative of these kinds of rights. There are no significant impacts to the right to hunt, right to fish or right to gather under Alternatives A, B, or C.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.